

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-12 OMB-01 /107 W
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P 211535Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9354
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASUH TOKYO
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 05333

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CH, UR, PBOR
SUBJECT: SOVIETS PUBLISH ARTICLE ON SUPREME SOVIET MESSAGE

REF: (A) MOSCOW 3580, (B) MOSCOW 4699

SUMMARY: AUTHORITATIVE TASS ARTICLE ON SUPREME SOVIET-NPC
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MESSAGE INDICATES THAT SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS ARE NOT
IMPROVING AND COULD DETERIORATE FURTHER. THE LULL IN
SOVIET ANTI-CHINESE PROPAGANDA THAT COINCIDED WITH RECENT
NPC HAS ENDDA AND SOVIET MEDIA ATTACKS ON CHINA ARE ON
THE UPSWING AGAIN. END SUMMARY.

1. ASSUME DEPT. HAS FULL TEXT OF TASS MARCH 20 ARTICLE

ON SUPREME SOVIET-OSC MESSAGE, "ON SOVIET-CHINESE RELATIONS," WIDELY REPORTED IN FOREIGN MEDIA. SOVIET MEDIA ARE GIVING CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO ARTICLE, INCLUDING FULL READING ON MARCH 20 EVENING TV NEWS PROGRAM "VREMYA." WE EXPECT THAT SOVIET MEDIA IN WEEKS AHEAD WILL DRAW HEAVILY ON ARTICLE'S THEME OF SOVIET "REASONABLENESS" AND PRC "INTRANSIGENCE."

2. FOLLOWING STRIKE US AS NOTEWORTHY ELEMENTS OF ARTICLE'S TREATMENT OF MESSAGE:

-- PROPAGANDISTIC CHARACTER OF MESSAGE: ON THE FACE OF THE ARTICLE WERE INCLINED TO AGREE WITH INTERPRETATION

OF CHINESE DIPLOMATS HERE LAST WEEK (REF B) THAT SUPREME SOVIET MESSAGE CONTAINS NOTHING NEW, IS FILLED WITH PROPAGANDA, AND WAS PROBABLY SENT WITH THE INTENTION TO PUBLISH IT LATER AS A PROPAGANDA PLOY. SOVIETS PROBABLY HAD LITTLE OR NO HOPE THAT MESSAGE WOULD BRING POSITIVE CHINESE RESPONSE. THE SOVIET PUBLICATION OF MESSAGE AND MESSAGE'S REITERATION OF PAST SOVIET PROPOSALS COINCIDES WITH RECENT SOVIET UNILATERAL PUBLICATION OF DRAFT SOVIET GOOD NEIGHBOR TREATY WITH JAPAN (JAPANESE DIPLOMATS HERE NOW BEMOAN THAT JAPANESE EVER ACCEPTED DRAFT AND CLAIM THAT THIS SET THE STAGE FOR SUBSEQUENT SOVIET PUBLICATION) AND REMINDS US OF THE ANNUAL SOVIET PRESENTATION OF SERIES OF "PROPOSALS" AT THE UN. THE ONLY NEW ITEM, THE SUGGESTION OF A "JOINT STATEMENT" IS CONFIDENTIAL

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ANOTHER CASE OF "OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLE":

-- INDICATIONS THAT SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS MAY BE WORSENING:

IN THIS REGARD, ARTICLE STATES THAT "THE EXISTING STATE OF AFFAIRS LEADS... TO THE HEIGHTENING OF TENSIONS IN INTER-STATE RELATIONS," AND REFERS TO NEED "TO STOP THE DANGEROUS PROCESS OF FURTHER AGGRAVATION OF RELATIONS WHICH MAY LEAD TO SERIOUS NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES..." SINCE LAST FALL, THE SOVIETS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMENT HAVE CHARGED PEKING'S POST-MAO LEADERS WITH NOT ONLY CONTINUING BUT INTENSIFYING PEKING'S ANTI-SOVIETISM, PARTICULARLY IN CONNECTION WITH ACTIVE CHINESE PURSUIT OF CLOSER TIES WITH STATES IN WESTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA, IN CONTEXT OF "ANTI-SOVIET" THREE WORLDS THEORY.

-- LACK OF REFERENCE TO THE BORDER: AS REPORTED IN TASS ARTICLE, THE MESSAGE MAKES NO REFERENCE TO THE OFTEN REPEATED CHINESE DEMAND (MOST RECENTLY RESTATED BY HUA KUO-FENG AT NPC) THAT SOVIETS HONOR ALLEGED KOSYGIN 1969 COMMITMENT REGARDING "DISPUTED AREAS" AND TROOP PULLBACKS AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD IMPROVING RELATIONS. ARTICLE'S STATEMENT THAT PRC LEADERSHIP'S MARCH 9 RESPONSE "REPEATED UNACCEPTABLE PRELIMINARY CONDITIONS IT HAS

ADVANCED BEFORE" INDICATES THE CHINESE ANSWER TO MESSAGE PARALLELED HUA'S NPC REMARK. THERE IS NO HINT OF SOVIET INITIATIVES ON THE BORDER AND ARTICLE REVERSES HUA'S CHALLENGE AT NPC (AND AT 1977 ELEVENTH PARTY CONGRESS) BY CALLING ON PEKING TO MATCH WORDS WITH DEEDS.

-- IN OTHERWISE RELATIVELY UPBEAT FINAL PARAGRAPH, STATEMENT THAT "OF COURSE, PEKING'S PRESENT HOSTILITY TO THE USSR CANNOT BUT BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE SOVIET UNION," INDICATES THAT MOSCOW INTENDS TO CONTINUE RESPOND-

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ING IN KIND TO CHINESE ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA BLASTS AND MACHINATIONS.

3. COMMENT: THE APPARENT PROPAGANDA MISSION OF THE SUPREME SOVIET MESSAGE, THE TASS ARTICLE'S REFERENCES TO BAD AND POSSIBLY DETERIORATING SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS, THE INDICATIONS THAT MOSCOW REMAINS UNWILLING TO MAKE CON-

CESSIONS TO PEKING ON THE BORDER IN ORDER TO IMPROVE
RELATIONS, AND THE EXPRESSION OF A SOVIET INTENTION TO
CONTINUE TO RESPOND IN KIND TO CHINESE ANTI-SOVIET
PROPAGANDA AND MACHINATIONS, ALL SUGGEST THAT THE SOVIETS
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DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE THAT AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE POOR
STATE OF SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS IS IN THE OFFING. TO THE
CONTRARY, THEY INDICATE THAT MOSCOW BELIEVES SINO-SOVIET
RELATIONS WILL REMAIN POOR AND COULD EVEN WORSEN.

4. MEANWHILE, FOLLOWING THE LULL IN ANTI-CHINESE SOVIET
PROPAGANDA THAT COINCIDED WITH THE NPC SESSION (REPORTED
REF A), WHICH MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH
THE SENDING OF FEB. 24 SUPREME SOVIET MESSAGE, SOVIET
ATTACKS ON CHINA IN THE MEDIA HERE ARE AGAIN ON THE
UPSWING. MARCH 20 IZVESTIYA SIGNED COMMENTARY ACCUSES
CHINA OF PURSUING MAO'S HEGEMONISTIC AIMS IN ASIA THROUGH
A TWO-PRONGED POLICY OF ENCOURAGING BETTER STATE-TO-STATE
RELATIONS WITH ASIAN GOVERNMENTS (ARTICLE CITES RECENT
VISITS BY CHINESE LEADERS TO SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN
COUNTRIES) WHILE UNDERMINING THESE SAME GOVERNMENTS (E.G.,
PEKING'S ALLEGED ASSISTANCE FOR INSURGENCIES IN BURMA,
INDIA AND THE PHILIPPINES). COMMENTARY ALSO CITES INDIAN
PRIME MINISTER DESAI'S STATEMENT THAT CHINA CONTINUES
TO OCCUPY FIFTEEN THOUSAND SQUARE MILES OF INDIAN TERRI-
TORY, AND IT NOTES THAT PEKING MEDIA BROADCASTS INDICATE
THAT THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP DOES NOT PLAN TO RETURN THE
TERRITORY "SEIZED" IN 1962 FROM INDIA. TOON

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